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PTO/SB/05 (4/98)

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# UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL

(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(b))

Attorney Docket No. 30150-pa

First Inventor or Application Identifier Steven A. Weiss

Title Gaming Device and Method.

Express Mail Label No. EL217259727US

**APPLICATION ELEMENTS**

See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.

1.  Fee Transmittal Form (e.g., PTO/SB/17)  
(Submit an original and a duplicate for fee processing)
2.  Specification [Total Pages 16]
  - Descriptive title of the Invention
  - Cross References to Related Applications
  - Statement Regarding Fed sponsored R & D
  - Reference to Microfiche Appendix
  - Background of the Invention
  - Brief Summary of the Invention
  - Brief Description of the Drawings (if filed)
  - Detailed Description
  - Claim(s)
  - Abstract of the Disclosure
3.  Drawing(s) (35 U.S.C. 113) [Total Sheets 5]
4. Oath or Declaration [Total Pages 1]
  - a.  Newly executed (original or copy)
  - b.  Copy from a prior application (37 C.F.R. § 1.63(d))  
(for continuation/divisional with Box 16 completed)
    - i.  DELETION OF INVENTOR(S)  
Signed statement attached deleting inventor(s) named in the prior application, see 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b).

\*NOTE FOR ITEMS 1 & 13: IN ORDER TO BE ENTITLED TO PAY SMALL ENTITY FEES, A SMALL ENTITY STATEMENT IS REQUIRED (37 C.F.R. § 1.27), EXCEPT IF ONE FILED IN A PRIOR APPLICATION IS RELIED UPON (37 C.F.R. § 1.28).\*
ADDRESS TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Box Patent Application  
Washington, DC 20231

5.  Microfiche Computer Program (Appendix)
6. Nucleotide and/or Amino Acid Sequence Submission  
(if applicable, all necessary)
  - a.  Computer Readable Copy
  - b.  Paper Copy (identical to computer copy)
  - c.  Statement verifying identity of above copies

**ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION PARTS**

7.  Assignment Papers (cover sheet & document(s))
8.  37 C.F.R. § 3.73(b) Statement  Power of (when there is an assignee)  Attorney
9.  English Translation Document (if applicable)
10.  Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)/PTO-1449  Copies of IDS Citations
11.  Preliminary Amendment
12.  Return Receipt Postcard (MPEP 503)  
(Should be specifically itemized)
  - a.  Small Entity  Statement filed in prior application, (PTO/SB-09-12)
  - b.  Status still proper and desired
13.  Certified Copy of Priority Document(s)  
(if foreign priority is claimed)
14.  Other: .....
15.  Other: .....

## 16. If a CONTINUING APPLICATION, check appropriate box, and supply the requisite information below and in a preliminary amendment:

Continuation  Divisional  Continuation-in-part (CIP) of prior application No: \_\_\_\_\_ J \_\_\_\_\_

Prior application information: Examiner \_\_\_\_\_

Group / Art Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

For CONTINUATION or DIVISIONAL APPS only: The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which an oath or declaration is supplied under Box 4b, is considered a part of the disclosure of the accompanying continuation or divisional application and is hereby incorporated by reference. The incorporation can only be relied upon when a portion has been inadvertently omitted from the submitted application parts.

**17. CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS**

<input type="checkbox"/> Customer Number or Bar Code Label	(Insert Customer No. or Attach bar code label here)			or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence address below
Name	Bernhard Kretten			
Address	77 Cadillac Drive, Suite 245			
City	Sacramento	State	CA	Zip Code 95825
Country	United States	Telephone	(916) 921-6181	Fax (916) 921-9213

Name (Print/Type)	Bernhard Kretten	Registration No. (Attorney/Agent)	27,037
Signature			Date 9/13/00

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# FEE TRANSMITTAL

## for FY 2000

Patent fees are subject to annual revision.

Small Entity payments must be supported by a small entity statement, otherwise large entity fees must be paid. See Forms PTO/SB/09-12. See 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.27 and 1.28.

TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT (\$ 690.00)

## Complete If Known

Application Number	9/13/00
Filing Date	9/13/00
First Named Inventor	Steven A. Weiss
Examiner Name	
Group / Art Unit	
Attorney Docket No.	30150-pa

## METHOD OF PAYMENT (check one)

1.  The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayments to:

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Deposit Account Name Bernhard Kreten

 Charge Any Additional Fee Required Under 37 CFR §§ 1.16 and 1.17

2.  Payment Enclosed:

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## FEE CALCULATION (continued)

## 3. ADDITIONAL FEES

Large Entity Fee Code (\$)	Small Entity Fee Code (\$)	Fee Description	Fee Paid
105	130	205 65 Surcharge - late filing fee or oath	
127	50	227 25 Surcharge - late provisional filing fee or cover sheet	
139	130	139 130 Non-English specification	
147	2,520	147 2,520 For filing a request for reexamination	
112	920*	112 920* Requesting publication of SIR prior to Examiner action	
113	1,840*	113 1,840* Requesting publication of SIR after Examiner action	
115	110	215 55 Extension for reply within first month	
116	380	216 190 Extension for reply within second month	
117	870	217 435 Extension for reply within third month	
118	1,360	218 680 Extension for reply within fourth month	
128	1,850	228 925 Extension for reply within fifth month	
119	300	219 150 Notice of Appeal	
120	300	220 150 Filing a brief in support of an appeal	
121	260	221 130 Request for oral hearing	
138	1,510	138 1,510 Petition to institute a public use proceeding	
140	110	240 55 Petition to revive - unavoidable	
141	1,210	241 605 Petition to revive - unintentional	
142	1,210	242 605 Utility issue fee (or reissue)	
143	430	243 215 Design issue fee	
144	580	244 290 Plant issue fee	
122	130	122 130 Petitions to the Commissioner	
123	50	123 50 Petitions related to provisional applications	
126	240	126 240 Submission of Information Disclosure Stmt	
581	40	581 40 Recording each patent assignment per property (times number of properties)	
146	690	246 345 Filing a submission after final rejection (37 CFR § 1.129(a))	
149	690	249 345 For each additional invention to be examined (37 CFR § 1.129(b))	

Other fee (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Other fee (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

SUBTOTAL (3) (\$ 0.00)

SUBMITTED BY		Complete (if applicable)		
Name (Print/Type)	Bernhard Kreten	Registration No. (Attorney/Agent)	27,037	Telephone (916) 921-6181
Signature		Date	9/13/00	

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

**TITLE OF THE INVENTION**

# Gaming Device and Method Having a Plurality of Serially Dependent and Independent Bonuses

### **FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

The following invention is generally related to instrumentalities known as gaming devices. More specifically, the instant invention is directed to a gaming device intended to be deployed in a casino which accepts wagering.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

Casinos and their patrons have an insatiable thirst for novelty in the gaming machines in which a player embarks upon a wagering proposition using the gaming device. More and more floor space in a casino has been devoted to gaming devices because of consumer acceptance. A player can move at one's personal pace as compared to table games and can select from an astounding array of different propositions and themes. Casino's have found gaming machines to be durable, popular and not labor intensive.

As a consequence, there is an ongoing endeavor to provide gaming machines which provide patrons with a fresh product that offers varying betting propositions and opportunities.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The instant invention is distinguishable over prior gaming devices in that the gaming premise is intuitive, the game is easy to understand and provides players with a high degree of excitement along with visual and auditory stimulus.

More particularly, the instant invention initiates with a display evocative of a mechanical reel. It may be a mechanical reel in actuality or a video depiction thereof. The reel defines a primary game which when played includes a multiplicity of paylines activated preferably as a function of the magnitude of the wager made by the player. The larger the wager the more paylines are activated. A payable is provided which alerts the player as to which combination of symbols on the reel are recognized as worthy of providing an award should the symbols appear on a payline. Special symbols are also provided. A special symbol will immediately induce advancement to a bonus round and preferably includes an initial posting of credits associated with the initiation of the bonus event. At least one symbol is required to appear and perhaps preferably several matching symbols along a payline to trigger a bonus event.

A first bonus event involves a playing path that a simulated character such as a dog is required to traverse. The number of steps that the simulated character takes is determined by a spinner located in a video screen which the player activates, preferably by touching. In this first bonus event, preferably a certain number of spins are allocated the player. Each time the character lands on a spot on the path

which correlates to a credit value, that credit value is posted to the player's account. In addition, along the playing path are spaces which, if the character advances and stops thereat, signals the end of the bonus event. These spaces which indicate the end of the bonus event are entitled "Go Home". Should the player advance the character to the terminus of the playing path, a second bonus round evolves, known as "Easy Street".

In addition, the symbols on the reel may allow the player to advance directly to the second bonus round, Easy Street, without the intervening first bonus round where the character advances along a path. In any event, the player, at the threshold of Easy Street sees the on screen character in a vehicle traveling down a road having a plurality of mercantile establishments along the road. The character's vehicle stops at one of the establishments for a final determination of the player's second bonus for the posting of further credits. The character and vehicle may stop at an establishment as a function of a random operation associated with the processor, or may be designated by the player by touching an appropriate decision making button on the display. Once the character has stopped at the chosen establishment, a final posting of additional credits due the player is incremented on a credit meter and the second of the two bonus rounds is terminated whereupon the player is prompted to play again.

## OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide a new and novel gaming device and method.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a device and method as characterized above which is relatively intuitive to understand, has eye appeal and provides enhanced enjoyment.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a device and method as characterized above which is readily recognizable and lends itself to standardization so that the same game at various machines can be readily identified.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a device and method as characterized above which allows a player the opportunity to advance serially to a plurality of bonus events and also to engage the bonus events not in series.

Viewed from a first vantage point, it is an object of the present invention to provide a gaming device, comprising, in combination: wager accepting means, a display, means for operating said display as a function of activating said wager accepting means, a primary game on said display having particular outcomes thereon, and first and second bonus games, both of said games are accessed via said particular outcomes on said primary game, said first bonus game includes means to play said second bonus game.

Viewed from a second vantage point, it is an object of the present invention to provide a gaming device, comprising, in combination: wager means, a display, a

processor and random generator means coupled to said wager means and said display to generate a primary game on said display upon activation of said wager means, a first bonus game enabled by a certain outcome from said primary game, and a second bonus game enabled by a certain outcome from said first bonus game.

Viewed from a third vantage point, it is an object of the present invention to provide a gaming method, the steps including: accepting a wager, displaying a primary game, providing a primary game outcome which leads to a first bonus game, and providing a first bonus game outcome which leads to a second bonus game.

These and other objects will be made manifest when considering the following detailed specification when taken in conjunction with the appended drawing figures.

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

Figure 1 is a flow chart depicting the methodology associated with the instant invention.

Figure 2 is a gaming machine which lends itself to deployment of the game thereon.

Figure 3 is a first screen associated with the game defining a primary game.

Figure 4 is a screen depicting a first bonus game.

Figure 5 is a screen depicting a second bonus game.

## DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring to the drawings, wherein like reference numerals denote like parts throughout, reference numeral 10 is directed to the gaming machine according to the present invention.

In its essence, the device 10 includes a housing 16 which supports a visual display 2, preferably a video monitor, therewithin (figure 2). The display 2 may include a window 8 for special messages or for incrementing counting of credits accumulated by the player. The device also includes an LED or other readout 4 for prompting the player and can provide similar verbiage as the window 8 or in lieu thereof, to stimulate the player. The device includes an inlet 6 for the reception therein for coins, currency or the like to auger in the inception of play. A separate slot 7, capable of accepting and dispensing encoded moveable media 9 such as a smart card, is also present. A plurality of decision-making buttons 12 are located on the face of the apparatus 10, preferable below the display 2 and a pull handle 14 can be used to initiate play or as an alternative to supplement the decision-making buttons 12. A coin hopper 18 may be included to effectuate an output of an award due the player. The device 10 may have a top portion 32 with a display thereon having a motif correlative with the game to be played and can include a payable. A plurality of speakers 34 may be included on the device for aural interaction with the player. The apparatus also includes a processor P coordinating all functions and a random number generator G operatively coupled thereto for generating outcomes.

Referring now to figure 3, the display 2 includes a 3X5 matrix 30 having five columns C<sub>1</sub> through C<sub>5</sub> and three rows R<sub>1</sub> through R<sub>3</sub>. Although a 3X5 (RXC) matrix is shown, there may be fewer or more rows than columns as should be evident to one skilled in the art having been informed by the present disclosure. Each of the columns is simulative of a reel or may actually be contoured as a mechanical reel and the reels are capable of independent rotation. A plurality of paylines are associated with the rows, with the conventional paylines being row 1, row 2 and row 3, although non-linear paylines can also be enabled as is now evident to one skilled in the art informed by the present disclosure. Each reel includes a plurality of symbols, one of which is oriented with a respective row. Upon appropriate alignment of a plurality of matching symbols, those symbols when matched and that correspond to a paytable typically located on a glass 32 at the top of the machine will engender an award based on the correspondence of those symbols to the paytable. A random number generator G driven by processor P (figure 2) causes the outcomes that appear on the reel 30 to randomly occur and to denote the presence of symbols which are recognized by a paytable. The display 2 is preferably one that includes touch screen capabilities and at the bottom of the display 2 simulative buttons for lines played, bets per line, total bet and tabulations of paid amounts, won amounts and credits posted are visually accessible to the player. In the background of the reel matrix 30 and on the display 2 is a portion of a first bonus which can be achieved should an appropriate symbol or symbols appear on the reel mechanism.

30. For example, the symbol simulative of a dog bone bearing the nomenclature "wild", when present on a payline, could trigger the first bonus. It may be required that more than one wild symbol be present on one payline or by other means in order to achieve the first bonus round.

Referring to figure 4, assume that the first bonus round has been enabled whereupon the reels 30 are removed from the screen and the full depiction of the first bonus game is revealed to the player. The first bonus round is defined by a playing path or course 40 having an arcuate top portion 42 which begins in the upper left-hand corner of the display 2 which leads to a rectangular lower portion 44. The rectangular lower portion 44 frames by circumscribing a depiction of the second bonus 50 with the rectangular lower portion 44 having an arrow shaped terminus 46 pointing to a top medial edge of the second bonus 50. The playing path 40 includes a plurality of segmentations which define spots 41 on the path with each spot having differing numerical values. As a character 35 moves along the path, it lands on spots 41 as directed by a spinner 60 located in the upper right-hand corner of the display 2. When the spinner 60 is touched, a disc 62 rotates. When the disc comes to rest, one sector of the disc 62 aligns with a pointer 64 indicating how far the character is to advance along the path. So long as the character 35 lands on spots 41 having a numerical indicator, additional credits are posted to the player's account correlative with the magnitude of the numerical indicator on the spot. Should the character 35 be directed to a space 43 on the playing path that bears the nomenclature "go home",

the first bonus round is over and the game returns back to its normal playing status described with respect to figure 3. The player is then prompted to play again if desired and if not, the player can cash out as indicated by the flow chart of figure 1.

Assume that the character 35 has traversed the path 40 by exclusively landing on spots 41 having numerical values which increment and are posted as credits to the player's benefit, and then arrives at the terminus 46 of the first bonus round. In this event, the player then moves into the second bonus 50 shown in the center of figure 4. The display 2 is then transformed into the figure 5 depiction of the second bonus 50. Figure 5 reflects the character 35 in a vehicle 37 moving down a road 39 and bypassing a plurality of establishments 52. Each establishment has a different identity along the road which correlates with depictions at the bottom edge of the display 2. Thus, the character 35 has an opportunity to stop at establishments such as the golden brush, the spiked collar, the shoe store, the bank, the motel, a dinner establishment, a butcher shop, chips loto or top dog. The character 35 stops in front of the establishments which signifies another credit award. The character 35 may stop at one of the establishments as a function of the processor, or the stop may be controlled by the player pushing one of the buttons 52 on the screen. More than one stop may be permissible. The award, once posted, allows the player to reinitiate the game and upon receipt of further wagers, return to the figure 3 screen.

It is also possible, when viewing figure 3, to move directly to the second bonus should the symbol Easy Street shown in figure 3 appear on a payline or, more

likely, a series of Easy Street symbols appear on a payline. Thus, in some cases, the first bonus round shown and described with reference to figure 4 may be avoided with the player moving directly to the second bonus.

Moreover, having thus described the invention, it should be apparent that numerous structural modifications and adaptations may be resorted to without departing from the scope and fair meaning of the instant invention as set forth hereinabove and as described hereinbelow by the claims.

## CLAIMS

I Claim:

Claim 1 - A gaming device, comprising, in combination:

wager accepting means,

a display,

means for operating said display as a function of activating said wager accepting means,

a primary game on said display having particular outcomes thereon,

and

first and second bonus games, both of said games are accessed via said particular outcomes on said primary game, said first bonus game includes means to play said second bonus game.

Claim 2 - A gaming device, comprising, in combination:

wager means,

a display,

a processor and random generator means coupled to said wager means and said display to generate a primary game on said display upon activation of said wager means,

a first bonus game enabled by a certain outcome from said primary game, and a second bonus game enabled by a certain outcome from said first bonus game.

Claim 3 - The device of claim 2 wherein said second bonus game is also accessed by an outcome from said primary game.

Claim 4 - A gaming method, the steps including:

accepting a wager,

displaying a primary game,

providing a primary game outcome which leads to a first bonus game,

and

providing a first bonus game outcome which leads to a second bonus game.

Claim 5 - The device of claim 3 wherein said first bonus game is defined by a path which is to be traversed, spots on said path resulting in credits should a player land thereon and a terminus of said path leading to said second bonus.

Claim 6 - The device of claim 5 wherein spaces are provided on said path which end said first bonus game should the player land thereon.

Claim 7 - The device of claim 6 wherein said second bonus game includes a road upon which a vehicle travels and plural establishments along said road which if stopped at trigger an award of credits.

### **ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A gaming device and method having a primary display and a plurality of symbols on said primary display which leads to a first bonus. The first bonus is a serpentine path over which a character must traverse in order to achieve a second bonus in which the character moves along in a vehicle on a road "in a movie simulation". The character stops at at least one of a plurality of mercantile establishments. A second round may be accessed from the primary game without the intervening bonus game.

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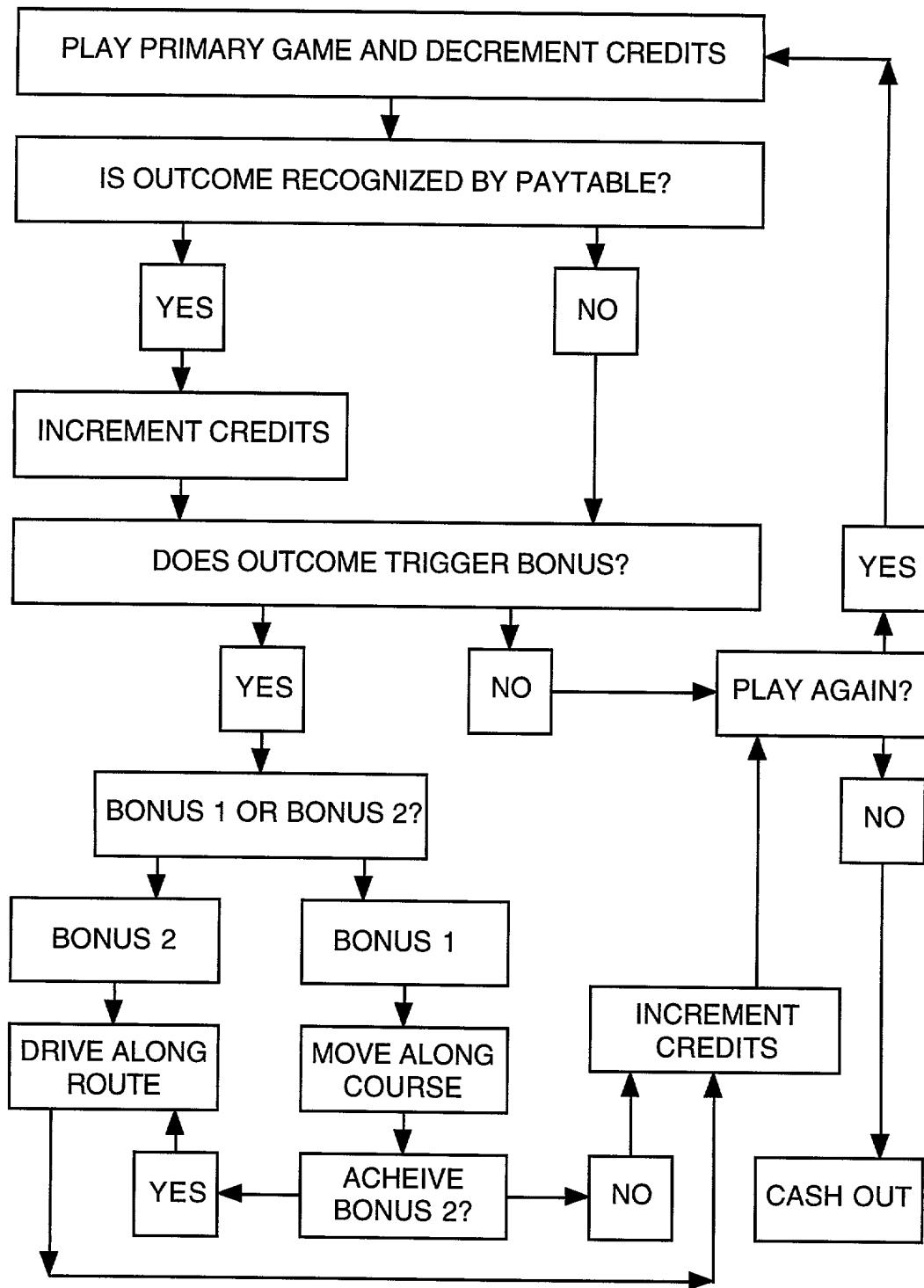


Figure 1

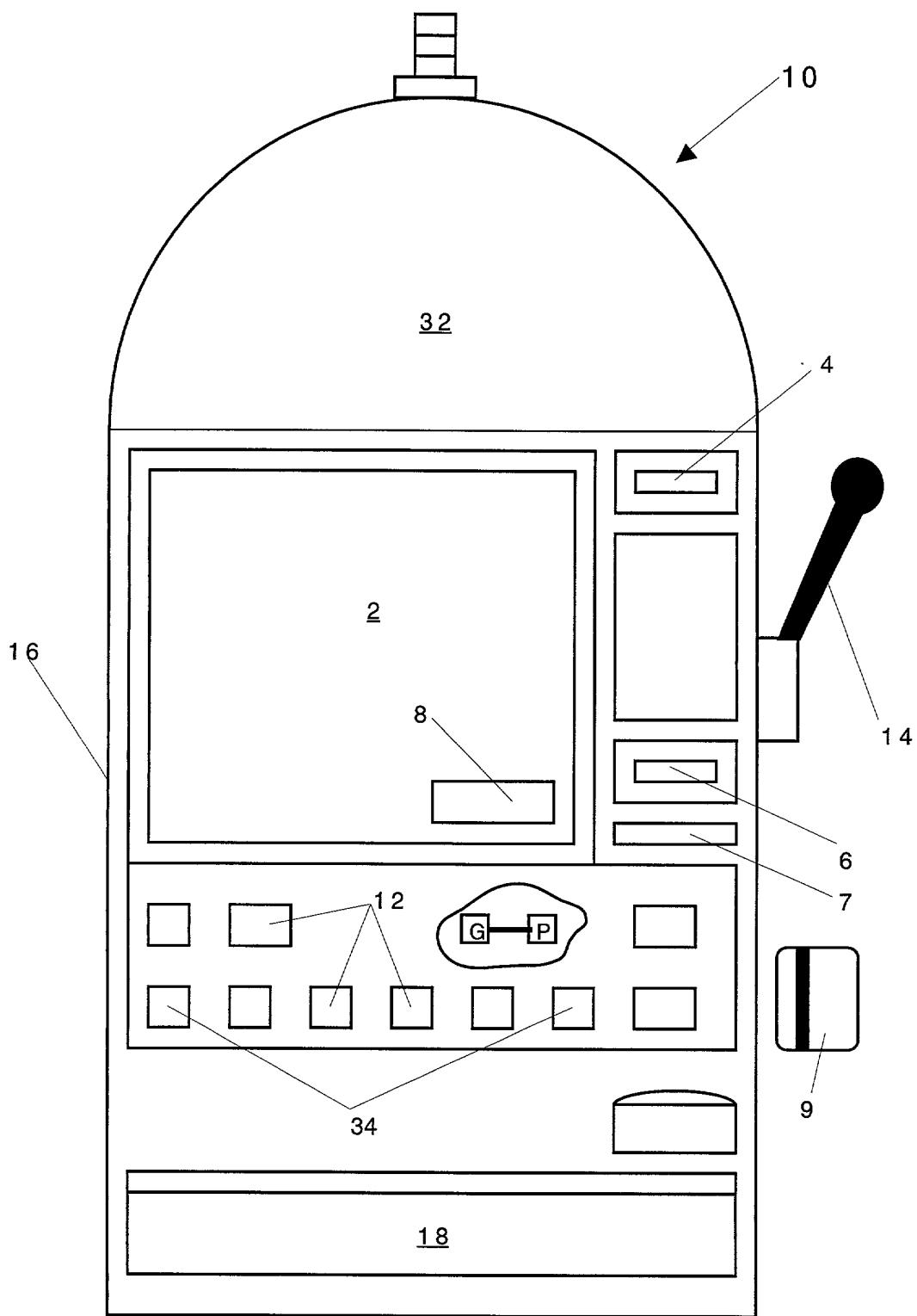


Figure 2

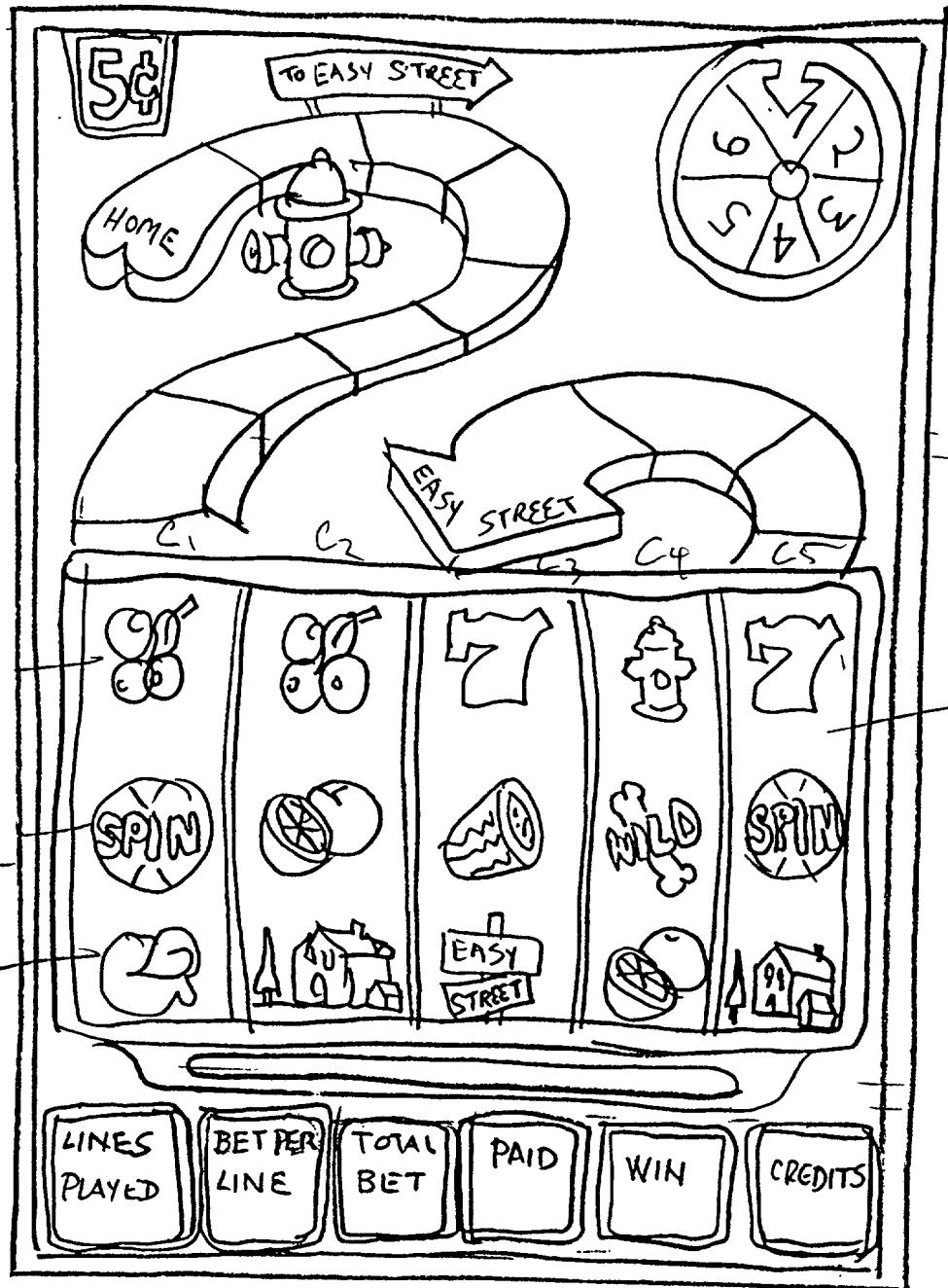


Fig. 3.

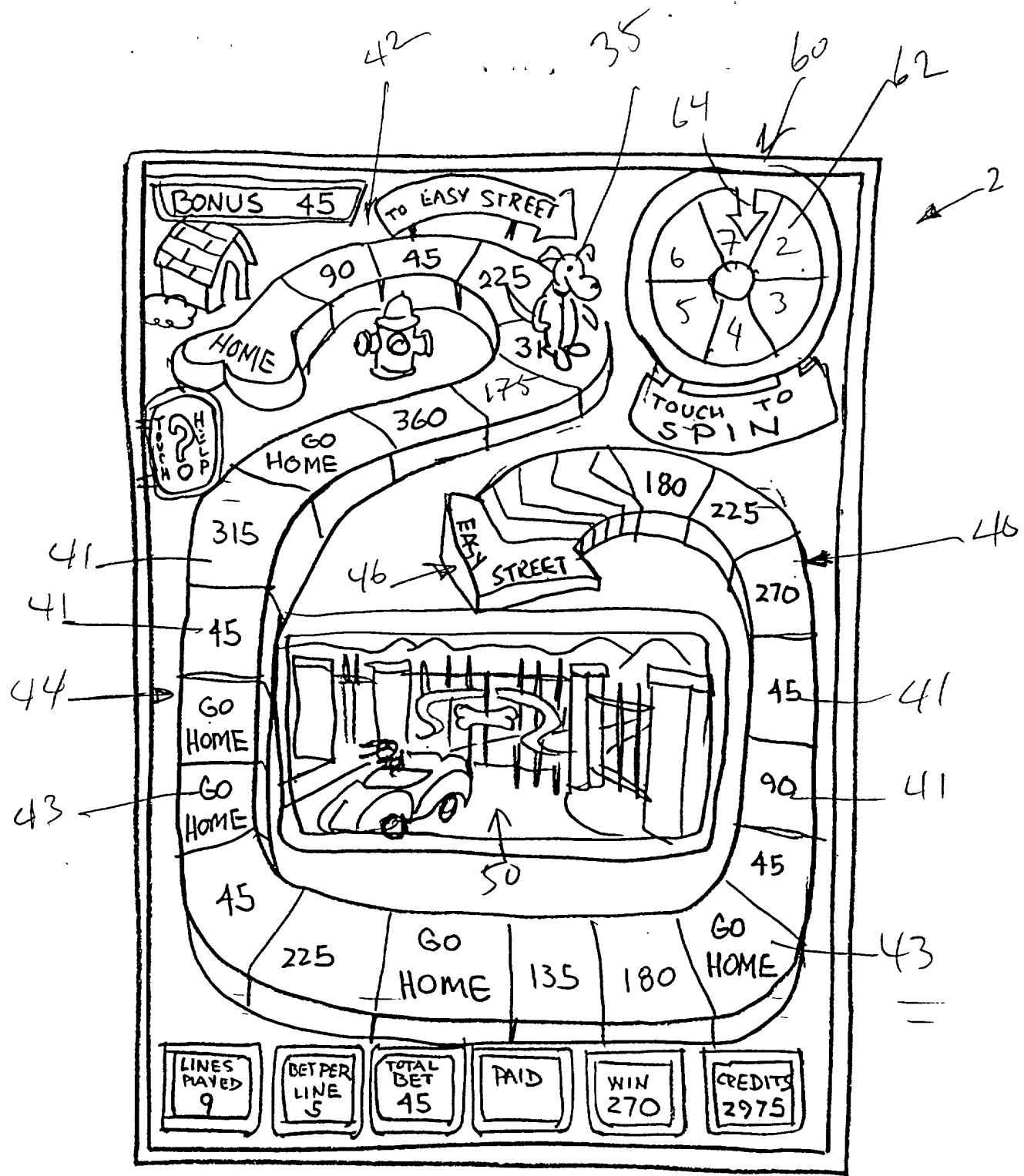


Fig. 4



Fig. 5

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.10**

**Applicant:** Steven A. Weiss

**For:** Gaming Device and Method Having a Plurality of Serially Dependent and Independent Bonuses

**Paper:**

1. A Patent Application (Utility) (comprised of pages 1 through 16);
2. A Utility Patent Application Transmittal;
3. A Fee Transmittal (original and one copy);
4. A Declaration for Patent Application;
6. Five (5) sheets of drawing figures (comprised of figures 1 through 5);
7. A check in the amount of \$690.00 of which is to cover the government filing fee for utility patent.

I hereby certify that the above identified correspondence, which is attached, is being deposited with the **United States Postal Service, Express Mail, Post Office to Addressee, mailing label #EL217259727US**, in an envelope addressed to:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
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Washington, D.C. 20231  
on September 13, 2000.

Heidi Hernandez

  
(Signature)

September 13, 2000

(Date of Signature)

**DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION**

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled Gaming Device and Method Having a Plurality of Serially Dependent and Independent Bonuses, the specification of which:

XX is attached hereto.

— was filed on \_\_\_\_\_ as Application Serial No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
and was amended on: \_\_\_\_\_ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, (Code of Federal Regulations 1.56(a)).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, U.S. Code 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s) (Number)	Priority Claimed NO
(Country)	(Day/Month/Year)
I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, U.S. Code 120 of any U.S. application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior U.S. application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, U.S. Code 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, 1.56(a), which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:	

(Application Serial No.) (Filing Date) (Status-patented, pending, abandoned)

I hereby appoint BERNHARD KRETN, Reg. No. 27,037 to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected herewith.

Address all telephone calls to: (916) 921-6181

Address all correspondence to 77 Cadillac Drive, Suite 245, Sacramento, California 95825

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full Name of Inventor: Steven A. Weiss Citizenship: United States

Inventor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Residence: 3300 Birtcher Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89118

Post Office Address: 3300 Birtcher Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89118